

A RURAL EPISODE.

Two honest husbandmen dwell side by side in farms adjoining. Grubbs and Stubbs their names.

Rough, homely names in south but—all they had.

And oft those names had served them in good stead.

When they had need of names to sign to notes, Grubbs had a son Ezekiel, tall and staunch.

As ever rustic who wore pants in boots, And rose at four to milk his seven kine.

And seek for grain in the morning sun, Stubbs had a son, a daughter only came.

To bless her father's soul, and to sing about his rooms, and to do odd chores.

'Twas men-times she was fair to look upon As a woman of business in early April.

Her name was Mary Ann, a gentle name, And gently borne by her, Ezekiel said.

And loved her, whom he used to see were one.

The names adorned and were kept apart By one plain picket-fence of easy compass.

Through which the faithful dog of Farmer Grubbs

Did oft meander in the eventime.

To chase the hens of worthy Farmer Stubbs, Thus was a feud betwixt the two; Mary Ann, and young Ezekiel, too.

Were not a party to the feud, but to equal their fathers' love, content were they.

To know that when some day the old men

had died, the farms should be united.

A goodly estate for a goodly pair.

But one day came a shadow o'er their path, A schism from their course strayed.

The peaceful confines of the Grubbs estate, Looked here, dug there, and sniffed and

sniffed about the place.

Saying wistfully with a shake of head: "It's not up to the land, it's not in the soil."

That's what's the matter, I warrant thou'lt find, For the like of the Grubbs estate, I have seen.

So he departed. Then good Farmer Grubbs

Did hold his head aloft and elevate.

His nose when he was asked, as who should say:

"I shall be rich. There's oil in this my land."

So when Ezekiel came and softly said:

"Father, I fear you're wrong, for I have seen."

He waxed full wrath, exclaiming in his

trill:

"How now! Thou who, when we have dug

for oil,

Thou art a man of riches, wilt thou wed

This beggar's girl, this pauper farmer's

Go!"

It shall not be."

And so the son

Went sorrowing to tell to Mary Ann,

And break her heart, and tell her he might

That he so rich must look above poor her.

Go!"

It shall not be."

Then there was digging on the Grubbs estate,

Digging in daytime, boring in the night.

For oil, for oil, for oil, for oil, for oil,

For days and weeks and months they dug

and tore.

What came of it? Nothing, nothing, and looked

nothing.

Then came the city scholar, and he looked

About the place, exclaiming: "Marvellous!

Behold the vein of oil that once lay here!

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ROUGH ON PLATO.

New Old Billon's Rejected the Teaching

of the Great Platonist.

It is well enough to say with the

ancients that 'we may shoot at the star

and though we know that our arrow

can not reach them, yet they go higher

than if we aimed lower.' What dif-

ference does that make? It makes no

difference how high they go, they come

down without having accomplished

anything. The aim that is low enough

to kill a deer is better than a best

drawn on Venus. It may not be as

grand in thought but it is more useful

in result.

Old man Billon's son Dan is a close

student. Billon, naturally and con-

sequently excusably proud of his son,

allowed the young man to remain in

his room, deeply covered with the

grand rubbish of ancient wisdom.

But when the young man, when every

hour in the cotton patch was worth its

weight in silver, Billon's neighbors

would ask:

"Why don't you make Dan help you

with your cotton?"

"He can't spare the time from his

studies."

"Studying is all well enough, but do

you think that it would hurt him much

to drop his books for a day or two and

take up a hoe? The grass is gaining

on you."

The old man sighed. He was mak-

ing a great sacrifice. His son would

be a great blessing for it. One day

the old man reverently entered the

son's room.

"Sit down, father."

The old man sat down, and, pointing

to an open volume that lay on the

young man's desk, asked:

"What book is that?"

"Plato's philosophy."

"Studying it, I reckon?"

"Yes, haven't studied any thing else

for some time."

"Full of interest in readin', I reckon."

"As grand thought as ever ex-

pressed."

"An' law, is it?"

"O, no."

"Medicine, I reckon?"

"No, it's philosophy."

"Yes, but what is philosophy?"

"O—er—well, it's er—it's the—the

soul of a great man, shaped into

words."

"Ah, ha. What does this here fel-

der Plato propose to 'arn you?"

"To be great, to look high."

"Yes, but does he tell you what to

look at?"

"O, er—yes, he—that is, he tells

you to study."

"Ah, but what does he tell you to

study with the body?"

"The body! Why, he scorns the body."

"Ah, ha. Don't 'tappen to have much

use for it, eh?"

"He is higher than all things phys-

ical."

"Don't say nothin' about fox tail and

wire grass, I reckon."

"Of course not."

"Sorter silent on cotton, too, I

reckon."

"Why, father, what can you mean?"

"Agin Plato, I tell you. Ain't got nothin'

agin Plato."

"Plato," the student suggested.

"Yes, I ain't got nothin' agin him,

you understand, and reckon he may be

a putty clever fellow, but I tell you

what's a fact. He ain't worth his salt

when the cotton's in the grass; so, Dan,

jest grab that hoe bahe Peace and Or-

der Scotty, and hoe bang in the

grass an' swear the grass an' I 'arn

the cotton to look up."

"Great goodness!" the affrighted

young man exclaimed. "I can't stand

it out here."

"O, but you mustn't pay no attention

to the body. The sun won't hurt your

soul."

"I reckon."

"Wall, your grub stops. Been

feedin' old Whut's name long enough.

Comin'?"

"I would, but—"

"All right, grub stops, an' you'll

have to pay rent for this room."

The young man sighed, arose and

followed his father. Two hours later

a panting and perspiring Platonist,

wielding a heavy hoe, was seen strik-

ing at the fox-tail grass.—*Arkansas*

Traveler.

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